



Ministry of External Affairs

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Joint Statement on India- Maldives Bilateral Talks during the official visit of the External Affairs Minister to Maldives

February 20, 2014

1. The Minister of External Affairs of India, H.E. Mr. Salman Khurshid paid an official visit to Maldives on 20 February 2014, coinciding with his participation in the 35th Inter-Summit Session of the SAARC Council of Ministers, at the invitation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Maldives, Ms. Dunya Maumoon.
2. Bilateral talks between the two governments were held on 20 February 2014 in a warm and friendly atmosphere, reaffirming the close and cordial relations shared between the two countries. Minister Salman Kurshid paid a courtesy call on H.E. Mr. Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom, President of the Republic of Maldives.
3. The External Affairs Minister of India was assisted at the bilateral talks by Foreign Secretary Smt. Sujatha Singh, High Commissioner of India to the Maldives Shri Rajeev Shahare; Joint Secretary (SM&IOR), Smt. Suchitra Durai, Joint Secretary (EAMO) Shri Sunjay Sudhir, Deputy High Commissioner, Shri Sanjay Rana, Director (EAMO) Shri Vipul and other officials from the Ministry of External Affairs and the High Commission of India in Malé.
4. The Foreign Minister of Maldives was assisted at the bilateral talks by Foreign Secretary, Dr. Ali Naseer Mohamed, Deputy Minister, Ms. Fathimath Inaya, Deputy Minister, Mr. Ali Hameed, Permanent Secretary, Mr. Hassan Shifau, Joint Secretary, Ms. Aishath Liusha Zahir, Director, Ms. Farzana Zahir and other officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
5. Maldives expressed deep satisfaction over President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom's successful State visit to India from 1-4 January 2014 at the invitation of the Hon'ble President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee which has further strengthened the long-standing special and close relationship that exists between the two countries. The two sides reviewed the status of implementation of the agreements reached during the State Visit of President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom. In this regard, they recalled the Joint Statement dated 2 January 2014 issued on the occasion of the State Visit of President of Maldives to India and reiterated their commitment to fully implement it. Issues pertaining to bilateral, regional and multilateral developments were also discussed. There was a convergence of views on all these issues between India and Maldives.

6. The two sides reiterated their commitment to work together to promote democracy, development and mutual respect of each other's sovereignty and peaceful co-existence and to contribute to peace, prosperity and security in the Indian Ocean region and South Asia. India noted with appreciation President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom's statement that security in the Indian Ocean region is vital to the security of India and Maldives.
7. Maldives appreciated the action taken by India regarding removal of the visa requirement for Maldivian nationals for visits to India for medical treatment in addition to tourism as well as doing away with the requirement of two-month gap between successive visits on tourist visa. The two sides recalled their commitment to address all issues related to welfare of each other nationals, including speedy provision of consular services, on a priority basis.
8. In the context of the Framework Agreement on Cooperation for Development between India and Maldives, signed in November 2011, and their agreement to establish the Joint Consultative Commission (JCC) as per Article 9 of the said agreement, the two sides agreed to work towards holding the first meeting of the JCC in the second half of 2014 on a mutually convenient date and venue.
9. During the visit, the External Affairs Minister of India formally handed over the building of the India-Maldives Friendship Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Studies. India has constructed this Faculty Building at a cost of US\$11 million. The Minister said that India would continue to remain engaged with the Faculty, including through deputation of experts. The External Affairs Minister also handed over a naval Landing Craft to the Government of Maldives and laid a foundation stone for a new building for the Ministry of Defence, to be constructed with Indian assistance. The Maldivian side appreciated the Indian assistance in building capacity in the Maldives and in creating meaningful infrastructure in the field of education, defence, health etc. The Maldivian side also conveyed that they would send the faculty members for courses and training programmes in India with a view to further enriching their capacity and skill levels.
10. Indian side informed the Maldivian side of its agreement to continue supplying essential goods to Maldives. Maldivian side expressed appreciation for resumption of export of stone aggregates. Indian side also informed steps taken with regard to the Maldivian request for import of petroleum products, including diesel, petrol and aviation fuel from Southern India. In this regard, it was informed that the Mangalore Refinery & Petrochemicals Ltd. has agreed, in principle, to export these petroleum products to Maldives on favourable terms.
11. The Maldivian side appreciated the work being done by the Indian companies in Maldives and assured their full support for expediting the implementation of the projects being undertaken by them. Both sides reiterated their agreement to consider a Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement at the earliest.
12. The two sides agreed to continue working together closely to implement in full the various agreements reached during the State Visit of President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom to enhance their bilateral cooperation.
13. The Indian side expressed its appreciation for efforts made by Maldives to host the SAARC Inter-Summit Council of Ministers Meeting. In this regard, the Government of Maldives appreciated the continued support of the Government of India to Maldives as the Chair of SAARC.

14. The two sides also discussed reform of the United Nations, including expansion of the Security Council in both permanent and non-permanent categories so as to better reflect contemporary geo-political realities and revitalization of the UN General Assembly. Maldives reiterated its support for India's candidature for permanent membership of an expanded and reformed UN Security Council. India reiterated its support for Maldives' candidature for non-permanent seat of the UN Security Council for the 2019-2020 term. Maldives also assured India of its support for India's candidature for the non-permanent seat of the UNSC for 2021-2022 term.
15. The External Affairs Minister of India thanked the Maldivian side for the warm and gracious hospitality extended to him and members of the delegation during their stay in Maldives. He invited Foreign Minister H.E. Ms. Dunya Maumoon to undertake a visit to India.



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